

identity and the information of enrollees in the health care exchange is another of the problems there that is worthy of discussion of this program.

#### THE GOVERNMENT SHUTDOWN AND HEAD START

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON LEE) for 5 minutes.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, I place a loving picture of a little one and the excitement that comes from a Head Start program to emphasize my story this morning and the discussion I want to raise this morning for a brief amount of time.

All of us have seen those western movies where the train is rushing down the track and coming to a point where the tracks are no more. Black-and-white television, we used to sit on the edge of our seats, wondering what would happen. For the aesthetics of the movie, we would see that train fall into a deep abyss, people screaming out of the window or some takeaway that doesn't see the final crash, or maybe it does.

So as I listen to my friends on the other side this morning, it seems as if I were watching that same movie. Today is October 15, the 15th day of a government shutdown.

Mr. Speaker, we are in crisis, and there are those who are rising to the floor of the House to misrepresent to the American people some discussion about ObamaCare, which is working every day in this Nation. Albeit as Medicare and Medicare part D, we all need to sit down and knuckle down and look at ways that we can make it work better for the American people.

But we are in crisis today, and I think it is important to know that there are thousands of Head Start teachers and Head Start positions for little ones like my good friend here, the son of Marlon. He is Hector, who is not able to be in a Head Start program right now today.

For my friends, let me say that we have reason to be able to engage in a reasonable solution, a responsible solution. Where are they in coming together to make sure that we don't default in the next 24 hours? Maybe I should educate them with a little graph that shows that, in actuality, the debt-to-GNP under President Obama has actually gone down, meaning the debt has gone down.

The sizable increase in the debt was in the past administration, of President Bush, under Afghanistan and Iraq—everyone knows that—with a Republican-dominated Congress, a Republican President, a war that many did not like, but no one saw the Democrats try to shut the government down. Why don't they acknowledge where this original debt has accelerated itself?

So now we want to move forward and invest in American infrastructure, and they are crying about giving Americans affordable health care. Where is the reason?

So our friends in the Senate, Senate Democrats, are leading on a proposal to which many of us yesterday would have said that we wanted a long extension of the debt ceiling.

Mr. Speaker, I have come here to be responsible on behalf of the American people. Let me read one sentence. On November 16, 1983, "Dear Howard." Howard was the majority leader, Howard Baker. "This letter is to ask for your help and support and that of your colleagues on the passage of an increase in the limit on the public debt." Signed, Ronald Reagan.

It is a misrepresentation to suggest that this is a political stunt. Raising the debt ceiling has been done year after year to pay the Nation's bills. While countries like our friends like China are pushing forward by saying maybe you don't need to rely upon America, which the world does because their currency is not flowing in the world cycle, we are watching while Rome is burning. So I am asking my colleagues to be responsible.

First, they could have put the Senate proposal of a short-term CR on the floor days ago, weeks ago. So now we have a proposal that many of us will probably find challenging to vote for, but I am ready to listen; and I am disappointed that our friends are not realizing the devastation that is happening with the government shutdown.

As a member of the House Judiciary Committee, it troubles me to hear that James Comey, the Director of the FBI, has said that he has laid off 3,000 people—3,000 FBI agents who are in the midst of law enforcement for America. What kind of country are we?

Judges—the Federal courts are saying they don't know if they are going to be able to go past October 15.

The greatest insult is the payments that are due the American people on Social Security and veterans' benefits that may be in jeopardy on November 1 if we don't do the work that we are sent here to do.

So I would ask my friends to lower the discord. Let's not wave Confederate flags in front of the White House, something that burns in my heart—individuals that want to divide America. Let's not call the President what is a faith that we should be respecting. Let's not denigrate ourselves by suggesting that our President worships Allah, but it is not denigrating the President as much as it is denigrating millions of Americans who are Muslims. I am outraged that we would raise it to this temperature.

So, Mr. Speaker, all I can say is let us be in the spirit of Abraham Lincoln, who wanted to bring America together, and let us pass a reasonable response to the government shutdown. Let's not be talking about imploding or tearing this country down.

#### A BATTLE FOR THE ECONOMIC SURVIVAL OF THIS NATION

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. DUNCAN) for 5 minutes.

Mr. DUNCAN of Tennessee. Mr. Speaker, you can never satisfy government's appetite for money and land; they always want more. Now we are \$17 trillion in debt and are headed to \$25 trillion in less than a decade under the best case scenario. Those are figures that are humanly incomprehensible; yet our estimates of our future unfunded pension liabilities are much, much higher. They are, probably, at least \$75 trillion or more.

The nonpartisan Congressional Budget Office is the one that has put out these estimates, and they estimated recently that interest on the national debt will quadruple in less than 10 years to an astounding \$857 billion in just 1 year. If we allow that to happen, the Federal Government could then pay only for Social Security, Medicare, Medicaid, and interest on the debt—nothing for defense, national parks, interstate highways, and so forth. Obviously, future Congresses cannot or would not allow that to happen, so they will then come in with a combination of huge tax increases and a tremendous inflation of the currency.

The fight we are in now is over a lot more than the "Unaffordable Care Act." It is a battle for the economic survival of this Nation. Anyone who wants their Social Security or their Federal or military pensions in order to be able to buy anything—or buy much at all in the very near future—should be demanding much more fiscal conservatism now. We either bite some very painful bullets now or we face much more difficult times in the very near future that will make our present problems look small in comparison. We could end up with problems like Detroit has now, but multiplied all across this Nation.

President Obama, when he was in the Senate, opposed raising the debt ceiling and said we shouldn't do it to our children and our grandchildren; and when we are in this war now over this spending, this battle for the economic survival of our Nation, Mr. Speaker, surely we do not want to ruin the future of our children and our grandchildren.

#### THE GOVERNMENT SHUTDOWN AND POTENTIAL DEFAULT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Connecticut (Mr. HIMES) for 5 minutes.

Mr. HIMES. Mr. Speaker, I rise on this 15th day of the government shutdown, a shutdown which has put hundreds of thousands of Americans out of work, that will have untold damage on what is already a hesitant economic recovery; and I rise as we contemplate the last maybe 24, 36 hours before an event unprecedented in American history: the possibility that, for the first